ARABIAN GODDESS

The Epic Tales of the Divine Feminine in Arabian Mythology

CHRONICLE PRESS

ARABIAN GODDESS

The Epic Tales of the Divine Feminine in Arabian Mythology

CHRONICLE PRESS

Copyright © 2024

All rights reserved. Without the showing prior permission of the publisher, no portion of this book may be copied, kept in a retrieval system, or

communicated in any form, whether mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording or otherwise. This includes transmitting it in any language.

Copyright © 2024

Disclaimer

The author is solely responsible for this book's information, ideas, and opinions; they do not necessarily represent the views of any institutions or individuals associated with the author. The author has made what they believe to be reasonable steps to make sure that the material contained in this book is accurate. However, neither the author nor the publisher makes any representations or guarantees, either stated or implied, regarding the completeness, accuracy, reliability, appropriateness, or availability of the content contained within. It is strongly recommended that readers seek assistance from relevant professionals or specialists in specific disciplines by consulting with them to acquire precise information tailored to their particular situations. The author disclaims liability for any loss, damage, or harm resulting from using the information provided in this book and any omissions or errors.

This book may reference websites, goods, services, or resources owned or operated by third parties. These references are solely offered for your convenience, and their inclusion does not indicate that we approve, sponsor, or recommend the content provided by the third party. Because the author and the publisher do not have any control over the nature, content, or availability of external websites, they cannot be held liable for any actions, decisions, or consequences resulting from using such external resources.

Forward

I would want to extend an invitation to go on a voyage that is genuinely extraordinary to those of you who are interested in unearthing ancient knowledge, who are captivated by the mysterious stories that are woven through the fabric of human life, and who are aficionados of the rich tapestry of mythology that transcends boundaries and resonates across time. Within this book's covers, we will explore the halls of myth and completely submerge ourselves in the ageless tales that have enthralled the human imagination for as long as anybody can remember.

In all of its magnificence, mythology acts as a compass that directs us through the complexities of the human experience. It is a mirror that reflects our perception of the universe and our role and embodies our collective dreams, fears, goals, and ideals. Mythology invites us to investigate the hidden aspects of our lives, whether we are more interested in the sweeping conflicts between gods and heroes or the hidden meanings in the stories of how the world was created.

Within these pages, you will encounter many pantheons and deities, each providing a distinctive perspective to examine the more expansive universe. It is essential to remember that mythology is not only a relic of the past but a living phenomenon that continues to impact our contemporary reality. Its influence can be seen in literature, art, music, and daily language. It invigorates us, sparks the fire of our imagination, and gives us a glimpse into the intricate web that is the history of humanity.

Mythology also acts as a connector, bringing together people from different cultures worldwide. It brings us together by highlighting the similarities in our experiences and the uniqueness of each of us as individuals. In the vast Pantheon of mythical figures, we find examples of universal themes such as love, betrayal, heroism, and sacrifice. These themes connect with every human heart, regardless of when or where they were written.

This book is both a celebration of mythology and an invitation to go on an adventure of discovery. This is an homage to the innumerable storytellers who have ensured the survival of these myths through the ebb and flow of the sands of time by passing them down from generation to generation. It is devoted to all people interested in mythology, namely those who find comfort in the ageless stories that have shaped our world since the beginning of time and continue to do so Today.

Therefore, I implore you, dear reader, to turn the page and completely submerge yourself in the enthralling delights that are still to come. Let us all come together to celebrate the mythology that brings us together, is not limited by the constraints of culture or time, and imparts a feeling of awe and wonder into our everyday lives.

Your imagination will be stoked, your horizons will be expanded, and you will be reminded of the eternal power of storytelling if you allow yourself to go on this voyage into the realms of mythology. And may you emerge from these pages, like the heroes of old, changed by the insight and enchantment that mythology has to give due to what you've learned here.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction to Pre-Islamic Arabia
al-Lat- Pre-Islamic Arabian Goddess
Al-Uzza- Mighty Arabic Goddess
Manāt- Goddess of Fate and Time
Isāf and Nā'ila- Cosmic Lovers
Nuha- Sun Goddess
Syrian Goddess of Fertility
Shams- The Radiant Sun Goddess
Suwāʿ - The Enigmatic Goddess of Ancient Arabia
Defenistions
One Last Thing...

Introduction to Pre-Islamic Arabia

In the hot, dry areas of ancient Arabia, there was a wide range of religions that thrived long before Islam did. The Arabian people's spiritual lives were formed for hundreds of years by this fascinating tapestry of beliefs, which was made up of threads from both local traditions and foreign ideas. Let's go back in time and learn more about the complicated world of Arabian religion before Islam.

Before Islam, Arabian spirituality was based on a strong practice of many gods. The people of Arabia believed in many gods and goddesses, and each one had their special powers and traits. These gods weren't far away and out of reach; they were an important part of everyday life. Imagine going through a very old town in Arabia. It's possible to find small shrines honouring local gods or take part in festivals honouring a certain god. The Kaaba in Mecca, which is a cube-shaped building that holds hundreds of statues of different gods, was the most famous of these holy places.

There were many ways to worship these gods. Pilgrims would go to holy places and pray and make sacrifices there. It was normal for people to use divination to get advice from the gods. There were strong ties between the Arabian people and their gods that were woven into everyday life. Interestingly, the idea of Allah existed in Arabia before Islam. However, experts still disagree about what his role is and what he is like. Was Allah seen as the most important god of all? Or was he just one of many gods? The answer probably changed based on where and when it was asked.

Even though polytheism was most common, monotheistic faiths also made their way to Arabia. Christianity spread along trade lines and through the power of nearby empires, especially in the north and South, where communities were set up. Miaphysitism, a belief that stresses how Christ is both holy and human at the same time, was the main form of Christianity that spread. There were also a lot of Jews, both immigrants and people who became Jewish in the area. In southern Arabia and the northwest Hijaz area, Jewish communities grew and thrived. These fundamentalist religions

brought new ideas and sometimes mixed with local customs, making religion even more complicated.

In the north, the powerful Sasanian Empire brought Zoroastrianism, which was a religion. This old Iranian religion had fire shrines and a dualistic view of the universe. It had followers in eastern and southern Arabia. Even though it wasn't as popular as some other big religions, Zoroastrianism was an important part of Arabian spirituality. A long-held belief that polytheism was the main religion in Arabia until Islam came along has been called into question by new research. From the 4th century CE onwards, there seems to have been a slow shift toward monotheistic or henotheistic beliefs, which means worshipping one god while not denying the presence of other gods.

This change didn't happen all at once or in the same way across Arabia. Think of how ideas change slowly over time, with some places adopting monotheism faster than others. It was this change that made it possible for Islam to grow in the 7th century.

It's hard to understand the pre-Islamic Arabian religion because there are so many pieces missing. Each of these sites gives us useful information, but they all have their flaws and possible biases. Researchers are still having a hard time putting together a full picture. Before Islam came to Arabia, there was a faith world that didn't just go away. The new church took on a lot of old beliefs and practices. The practice of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, for example, goes back to times before Islam. Knowing about these other religions helps us understand how complicated the beginnings and growth of Islam are.

When we think about the complex web of pre-Islamic religion in Arabia, we are aware of how different people's spiritual expressions are. The people of old Arabia tried to figure out their place in the universe and connect with God. This was done through the pantheons of many gods and the spread of monotheistic ideas. This look at faith and meaning still speaks to us Today, connecting us across the ages and reminding us of how we all want to understand the world.

al-Lat- Pre-Islamic Arabian Goddess

In Arabia before Islam, in the hot sands and busy oasis towns, al-Lat was one of the most revered and devoted goddesses. For hundreds of years, this powerful goddess, whose name only means "The Goddess," was a key figure in Arabian Peninsula religion. People worshipped her everywhere, from the Nabataean trade hubs to the holy places of Mecca, where she was seen as one of Allah's three daughters, along with al-Uzza and Manat.

The history of al-Lat goes back into the misty depths of Semitic sacred history. Her name sounds like the names of other ancient Near Eastern goddesses, like Elat, who was married to the Canaanite high god El. This link shows how important al-Lat was to her followers—she wasn't a minor goddess. They saw her as a cosmic figure. Some traditions even saw her as Allah's wife, making the bond between the two gods similar to a human marriage.

Al-Lat's face changed based on where and how she was worshipped. In the city of Palmyra in northern Arabia, she changed into the Greek goddess Athena. She showed up as a fighter goddess with a shield and a spear. It was al-Lat's job to protect and care for others, which balances out her fierce side. The holiest shrine to her was in the city of Ta'if, and it held a cube-shaped white stone that people would touch to experience healing.

The Lion of al-Lat, a beautiful sculpture that used to guard her temple, was probably the most powerful image connected to al-Lat. It was a striking visual metaphor for al-Lat's dual nature as both a fierce defender and a gentle caregiver. The strong cat figure had a small gazelle tucked between its paws. The gazelle stood for her kindness and compassion, while the Lion stood for her power and ferocity.

Al-Lat had much power in areas other than religion. Many people in Arabia have names that remember her because she was so important to the culture.

People who were travelling through dangerous areas and wanted to stay safe carved phrases into rocks that asked her to protect them. In the markets and council rooms of towns like Petra, people swore and swore by her name.

Al-Lat was the goddess of fertility and plenty, so she was very connected to the natural cycles that were necessary to stay alive in the harsh Arabian climate. People asked her for her blessings on good crops, healthy babies, and the wealth of both tribes and cities. In some beliefs, she was linked to Venus and could be seen as both the morning and evening star, a bright light in the sky that led her through the dark.

No one of a certain race or language was limited in their worship of al-Lat. She was both a goddess of war and peace. While also having much power, she embodied the caring parts of women. Her shrines were safe places where killing was not allowed, but fighters who wanted to win battles also went there to pray to her.

Islam's ideas about God's mercy and power are similar to al-Lat's ideas about fierce defence, nurturing love, and the meaning of life in the universe. The history of al-Lat goes back into the misty depths of Semitic sacred history. Her name sounds like the names of other old Near Eastern goddesses, which shows that her followers thought she was very important. She wasn't a small god; she was a cosmic figure who represented the caring and protecting parts of the divine feminine.

Al-Lat's face changed based on where and how she was worshipped. In the city of Palmyra in northern Arabia, she changed into the Greek goddess Athena. She showed up as a fighter goddess with a shield and a spear. It was al-Lat's job to protect and care for others, which balances out her fierce side. The most important shrine to her was in the city of Ta'if. It had a white stone in the shape of a cube that people would touch to feel better.

A beautiful sculpture called the Lion of al-Lat used to guard her temple in Palmyra. It was likely the most powerful picture of her. It was a powerful image that showed how al-Lat was both a fierce protector and a gentle nurse. A small deer was tucked between the strong cat figure's paws. She used the gazelle to show how kind and caring she was and the Lion to show how strong and dangerous she was.

Al-Lat had much power in areas other than religion. Many people in Arabia have names that remember her because she was so important to the culture. People who were travelling through dangerous areas and wanted to stay safe carved phrases into rocks that asked her to protect them. In the markets and council rooms of towns like Petra, people swore and swore by her name.

Al-Lat was the goddess of fertility and plenty, so she was very connected to the natural cycles that were necessary to stay alive in the harsh Arabian climate. People asked her for her blessings on good crops, healthy babies, and the wealth of both tribes and cities. In some beliefs, she was linked to Venus and could be seen as both the morning and evening star, a bright light in the sky that led her through the dark.

Many things about al-Lat showed how complicated and contradictory life was in Arabia before Islam. She was both a goddess of war and peace. While also having much power, she embodied the caring parts of women. Her shrines were safe places where killing was not allowed, but fighters who wanted to win battles also went there to pray to her. Islam's ideas about God's mercy and power are similar to al-Lat's ideas about fierce defence, nurturing love, and the meaning of life in the universe.

Today, al-Lat is an interesting look into the sacred life of Arabia before Islam. She makes us think of the spiritual world that was rich and complicated before monotheism became popular in the area. We are asked to think beyond simple labels like "pagan" and "monotheistic" to understand the many complicated ways that different cultures have dealt with God throughout history. In the end, al-Lat's story isn't just about a

goddess that has been lost. It's also about how people have always needed to find meaning, safety, and inspiration in the midst of life's big mysteries.

Al-Uzza- Mighty Arabic Goddess

In Arabia before Islam, in the hot sands and busy oasis towns, al-'Uzzā was one of the most revered and devoted goddesses in Arabic Mythology. Her name, which means "The Mightiest One," rang through the sandy landscapes as people prayed and yelled in battle. Along with her sisters al-Lāt and Manāt, al-'Uzzā was one of the three most important spirits in Arabian polytheism.

Before Islam became popular, the Arabian Peninsula had a lot of different kinds of religions. The Arab tribes believed in a huge number of gods, both big and small. But al-'Uzzā was the most important of all these holy people. Not only was she a goddess, but she was also a strong force that was a part of life before Islam.

Imagine that you are a tourist in ancient Arabia who is going through a harsh desert. As you get closer to the holy spot of Nakhlah, which is east of Mecca, you see something truly amazing. Three trees stand there in defiance of the empty land; they are live signs of al-'Uzzā's power. People thought that these trees, which were green and alive in a dry area, were actually the goddess herself. People would walk for days to get to this holy place in hopes of getting the Mighty One's gifts and safety.

However, al-'Uzzā's impact went far beyond this one shrine. People in the big city of Mecca could really feel her influence. The Quraysh, a strong tribe that ruled Mecca and its valuable trade routes, had much respect for al-'Uzzā. They thought of her as a divine guardian who would watch over their caravans as they made the dangerous desert trips.

Al-'Uzzā had her place among the gods and goddesses in the holy area of the Kaaba, the cube-shaped shrine in the middle of Mecca. Pilgrims would

walk around this old building and sing praises to al-'Uzzā, as well as al-Lāt and Manāt. This group of three gods, whom the Arabs before Islam often called "daughters of Allah," was very important to them.

Al-'Uzzā was not a goddess who was far away and hard to reach. Every day, she affected her life in big and small ways. People would respect her by giving their kids names like 'Abd al-'Uzzā, which means "Servant of al-'Uzzā." People would swear by her name in times of happiness or sadness. People talked about her beauty and strength in poems that were read around campfires and in the courts of chieftains.

Al-'Uzzā was the goddess of love and fertility, so she was very connected to the cycles of life that were so important in Arabia's harsh climate. She was prayed to by women for healthy children, farmers for crops, and traders for success in their businesses. There was more to al-'Uzzā than that, however. She was also a goddess of war and safety, and soldiers would pray to her before they fought. Fear would spread through battles as the shrill cry "O people of Uzzā!" echoed through the air.

A lot of different kinds of worship were done for al-'Uzzā. In some places, she was represented by a sacred stone, which was a plain, uncarved block that was thought to be a strong way to connect with this goddess. In other places, statues and images with more detailed designs looked like her. Al-'Uzzā was able to connect with and adapt to different tribes and cultures across Arabia, as shown by the different ways people honour her.

More trade and cultural contact happened in the centuries before Islam, and it's interesting to note that al-'Uzzā started to look like goddesses from nearby cultures. In some places, she was seen as the same as the Greek goddess Aphrodite or the Roman goddess Venus. She was linked to love, beauty, and strength. Combining these different traditions shows how faith was always changing and adapting to new things in ancient Arabia.

It was not always okay to worship al-'Uzzā and her sister gods, however. Not long before Islam, some people didn't believe in polytheism. Hanifs, who believed in only one god and didn't believe in traditional Arabian religion or the younger religions of Judaism and Christianity, pushed for the worship of one main god. In the end, these early signs of unity led to the rise of Islam in the 7th century CE.

Today, al-'Uzzā is an interesting look into the religious life of Arabia before Islam. She makes us think of the spiritual world that was rich and complicated before monotheism became popular in the area. Al-'Uzzā is more than just an interesting piece of history. She represents timeless human ideals, like the search for divine protection, the joy of life's abundance, and the belief that both strength and emotion are sacred.

By looking into the stories and signs connected to al-'Uzzā, we learn more about not only ancient Arabian culture but also the universal human search for meaning and a link to God. Her story makes us think about the different ways the holy feminine has been shown in different cultures and times and how these strong archetypes still affect how we see the world and our place in it.

Manāt- Goddess of Fate and Time

In Arabia before Islam, there was a hot desert where the shifting sands whispered old secrets. There was once a powerful goddess who controlled the lives of both humans and gods. People in Mecca worshipped three main goddesses. One of them was called Manāt, and she was thought to be the oldest and most mysterious. Manāt, along with her sisters Al-Lat and Al-'Uzzá, was part of a divine trio that shaped Arabia's spiritual landscape long before Islam did.

The force of Manāt's divine goal is in her name itself. It comes from old Arabic roots that mean "to measure out" or "to decide," which fits her job as the judge of fate. She was the cosmic weaver who made fate happen for everyone, from the poorest nomad in the desert to the most powerful clan chief. The future unfolded like a fabric in her hands, and each life was like a single thread in the big picture of life.

Let's imagine that the huge Arabian Peninsula used to be full of shrines and holy places, each one dedicated to a different god. Out of all these holy places, Manāt's shrine stood out as a spiritual lighthouse. People came from all over the world to visit her temple at al-Mushallal, which was on the sunny shores of the Red Sea between the busy towns of Mecca and Medina. Many people came here to pray to the goddess and look at her big statue to see what would happen to them.

Some Arab groups were very devoted to Manāt. The people of Banu Aws and Banu Khazraj especially respected her so much that their name became linked to her holy area. Poets of the time wrote about this deep devotion in their poems, swearing by Manāt's name and calling on her power in issues of justice and truth.

Mańt was more than just a neighbourhood goddess, however. She was one of the oldest figures in the Semitic Pantheon because her power reached across time and space. For a long time, people from the windswept dunes of

Arabia to the lush crescent of Mesopotamia respectfully whispered her name. People named their children after her. Names like Abd-Manah (Servant of Manāt) and Zayd-Manah (Increase of Manāt) show how famous she is still Today.

The people who worshipped Manāt had as many different ways of looking like her. In some places, she was shown as a wooden picture whose surface was stained with the blood of sacrifices, a stark reminder of how much it costs to be blessed by God. But the big idol that stood in al-Mushallal was her most well-known picture. Pilgrims would come here to finish their holy trips. As a sign of devotion, they would shave their heads and stand in silence in front of the goddess.

The power of Manāt went beyond the realm of the living. Furthermore, people thought she was a guardian of the dead who watched over graves and kept them holy. Inscriptions from long ago list her name along with those of other gods and curse anyone who would break into a tomb or upset the dead's eternal rest.

It was said that Manāt could be felt in Mecca, even in the holy area around the Kaaba. Among the 360 idols that used to fill this old shrine, hers stood next to those of her sister goddesses. People would walk around the Kaaba and raise their voices in a rhythmic song to ask Manāt, Al-Lat, and Al-'Uzzá to bless them and help them with their prayers.

It wasn't just one kind of prayer that people did for Manāt. She had many faces because she changed based on the beliefs and wants of different groups and areas. Some saw her as a caring mother figure, while others saw her as the strict judge of all law. Because of this, her group was able to grow and spread across the wide-ranging landscape of Arabia before Islam.

A story says that there was a wild fight at the goddess's temple. When the fighters got closer, a black woman with messy hair and piercing cries came out of nowhere. We might never know if this was a servant of Manāt or one

of the goddesses herself. That was the end of hundreds of years of worship and loyalty, though, when Sa'd killed the woman and broke the idol of Manāt.

Even though they lost, the memory of Manāt lived on. Some people think that her idol was taken to India and given a new home in the great temple of Somnath. The famous raid on Somnath by Mahmud of Ghazni in 1024 CE was based on this idea. It was an event that would change the way people from different cultures interacted for hundreds of years.

Today, Manāt is an interesting look into the complex faith of Arabian people before Islam. Before monotheism became popular in the area, there were a lot of different and complicated religions. Her story tells us of that. Manāt is more than just an interesting piece of history. It reflects long-lasting human concerns, like wanting to know our fate, find meaning in the way time flows, and connect with forces bigger than ourselves.

When we look at the figure of Manāt from different times, we are asked to think about the eternal questions that have always been important to people's faith. We can see parts of ourselves in her story as we try to find meaning and make sense of the strange things that happen in our lives. While her shrines may have been destroyed, the spirit of Manāt, the eternal weaver of fate, lives on in people's hearts as a reminder of how we are always trying to figure out our place in the grand fabric of life.

Isāf and Nā'ila- Cosmic Lovers

In the hot sands of Arabia before Islam, where myths and legends were a part of everyday life, there was a story about two lovers that would be told over and over again. This is the story of Isāf and Nā'ila, a god and goddess that the Quraysh tribe worshipped long before Islam became popular. Think about how busy the city of Mecca was in the past. At its centre was the Kaaba, a holy building in the shape of a cube that held many gods. Isāf and Nā'ila were two of the most important of these. They were carved out of

stone and put near the well of Zamzam, which led to water that kept people living in the desert.

That being said, who were Isāf and Nā'ila? Their past is full of myths and mysteries. Some say they were once lovers who did something wrong in the holy Kaaba because they loved each other so much. The gods turned them into stone because they had sinned, and they would stay that way forever. People in Mecca should have learned a lot from this story about God's judgment. It is said that the gods are always watching and punishing people who disrespect holy places. In a strange turn of events, these scared lovers turned into things that people worshipped.

The people of the Quraysh group really respected Isāf and Nā'ila. They thought that this god and goddess showed what their feelings and problems were like. When the Quraysh were getting ready for big ceremonies or going on dangerous trips, they would chant a special name for Isāf. People thought that this holy prayer would win favour with god and protect them through life's trials.

Picture what it looked like as people walked up to the holy hills of Safa and Marwa. The stone figures of Isāf and Nā'ila were put there to warn everyone who came by. This story was meant to be a warning, but over time, it lost its power, and the stones became worshipped as gods on their own. People who believed in them would touch them to get benefits, make sacrifices in their name, and whisper prayers for love, wealth, and safety.

It was not just people in Mecca who worshipped Isāf and Nā'ila. Traders and tourists all over the Arabian Peninsula told stories about how the star-crossed lovers turned into gods who protected them. In some places, they were thought to protect oaths and contracts, and their hardened bodies were thought to remind people that promises are legally binding.

Their roles changed over time, just like those of many other old gods. They became linked to fertility and plenty in some cultures. Some people prayed

to these gods to have children because they thought that their endless hug meant love that would last and the promise of a new life.

The story of Isāf and Nā'ila also shows how hard it was for Arabs to follow their religion before Islam. They were worshipped along with al-'Uzza and other important gods. In the world of gods, this showed that different gods could live together and even help each other out. But Is Ɓ f and Nā'ila were not meant to rule forever. When Islam spread in the 7th century CE, it put Arabia's old beliefs in many gods to the test. The Prophet Muhammad told people to get rid of the idols in and around the Kaaba so that Islam would spread.

Today, the story of Isāf and Nā'ila is an interesting look into the religion of Arabia before it became Islamic. It makes us think of all the different religions and ideas that people in the area had before monotheism became popular.

Nuha- Sun Goddess

In the hot sands of old Arabia, a group of gods used to control what people thought and felt. Out of all these gods, Nuha stood out as a source of life and light. She was revered as the sun goddess by the people in northern Arabia. Based on the fact that her name comes from the Semitic root N-H-Y and means "the ultimate," she must be a very important goddess.

Not only was Nuha bright because she was linked to the star ball that lit up the vast Arabian sky, but she was also brilliant in many other ways. Records from a long time ago call her "the elevated sun," which is both a reference to her solar nature and a deeper, more symbolic understanding. This two-sided view of Nuha's essence shows how difficult she was as a person—she was both a literal source of light and a well of knowledge.

Nuha was an important part of the religious views of the Yumu'il confederation, which was made up of northern Arab tribes that thought they were descended from Ishmaelites. Nuha was the sun god, Ruda was the moon god, and Atarsamain was Venus's god. This similarity between views in the north and those in the South shows how important celestial beings are to Arabian mythology as a whole.

Nuha had much power that went beyond being a sun goddess. Inscriptions from long ago discovered in the Najd area of Arabia tell us a lot about how people thought about her power. These writings say that Nuha's divine impact causes a lot of different feelings and experiences in people. One writing says, "by Nuha is flying into a rage," and the other says, "by Nuha is the jealousy of a lover." From these quotes, we can see that the ancient Arabians thought of Nuha as a goddess who had a close connection to human life and could make people feel strong feelings.

Many people believed that Nuha had a big impact on the world. Inscriptions show that people believed that all things in life, good and bad, came from the gods. According to this view, Nuha and the other gods were the most

important people in the world, and their heavenly whims and choices determined the fates of both individuals and groups.

Nuha would have been very important in the hard deserts of Arabia because she was a sun goddess. To Nuha, the sun would have been both a god to worship and fear because of its life-giving warmth and light and its deadly heat. Her followers probably asked for her help so they could have good harvests, move safely across the hot sands, and stay safe from the dangers of drought and heat.

A clear picture of the Arabian faith before Islam can be seen in the worship of Nuha and her fellow gods. Living in a world with such strong natural forces was hard. Life had order and meaning because of these gods and goddesses. If people were having trouble making sense of life's problems, Nuha could have helped them and given them hope through her links to wisdom and light.

One-god faiths spread through the area, and people stopped worshipping Nuha. This happened to many other old gods as well. While she is gone, her story goes on in Arabian mythology and in the artefacts that archaeologists find that help them figure out what people thought back then.

The story of Nuha is an interesting look into the spiritual life of Arabia in the past. It makes us think of how people have always wanted to find meaning in nature and link with forces bigger than themselves. When we think about these old beliefs, we understand how different cultures have tried to figure out the world and our place in it in very different ways.

Syrian Goddess of Fertility

In her heart, Atargatis was a fertility goddess who stood for the forces of nature that make life possible. But her effect was much bigger than this simple thing. It talked about a lot of different things, like love, safety, knowledge, and change. She was the "mistress" or "baalat" of her people, so they saw her as their best guardian and manager. The ancestors of Atargatis likely came from Canaanite gods like Anat, Astarte, and Asherah. She was born in the Bronze Age.

The Aramaic word for her name, 'Atar'atah, can mean many things, such as "the Fish Goddess Atar" or "Atar the Favorable One." This use of ambiguity in language shows how complicated her personality was and how she had many parts in different cultures. Atargatis's most famous temple was in Hierapolis, which is also called Manbij and is in northern Syria. When Queen Stratonice, wife of Seleucus I, rebuilt this holy site around 300 BCE, it became a centre for her worship. It was very important in spreading her cult all over Hellenistic times. Ancient writers called the temple a work of art for its design and religious importance. However, modern archaeologists still haven't found it.

One of the most interesting things about Atargatis's story is that she is linked to water and is often shown as a mermaid. A story says that Atargatis fell in love with a human hunter named Hadad and gave birth to his daughter, Semiramis. Some accounts of the story say that Atargatis killed Hadad by accident, which made her throw herself into a lake out of despair. The water saw that she was divine and changed her lower body into a fish's. This made the first mermaid. This story not only shows her connection to water but also focuses on love, loss, and change, which are important themes in her worship.

Many pictures of Atargatis show her with a lot of different symbols. She is often shown with a cap on her head, which represents her job as a city guardian. Lions often stand on either side of her chair to show that she rules over nature. She might have a sheaf of grain in her hands, which shows that

she is linked to birth and plenty. The fish and the dove are both holy to her, so they are big parts of her art. Doves stand for love and peace, while fish reflect fertility and the life-giving power of water.

Some of the things that were done to worship Atargatis were strange or even shocking to people from other cultures. People knew her priests for their happy rituals, which sometimes involved cutting or even castration of oneself, which reminded people of the cult of Cybele. At events held in her honour, where there was music, dance, and wild parties, people were in a religious ecstasy.

One interesting thing about Atargatis's faith was that her shrines were close to holy lakes or pools. People thought that the fish in the holy lake in Ascalon, a city on the Mediterranean coast, were gods.

People put gems on these fish and treated them with great respect. People would swim to an altar in the middle of the lake to make sacrifices. It was a very different and intense religious experience.

Atargatis affected many places, not just Syria. During the Hellenistic period, Greek traders and mercenaries brought her worship to many places around the world, where she was often confused with Aphrodite. In Rome, people called her the Dea Syria, which means "Syrian Goddess." Her cult became popular, especially among the poor and freed slaves from Syria.

In agricultural countries, Atargatis was very important because she was the goddess of fertility and safety. People who farmed would pray to her for good results and safety for their crops. Her connection to water made her a protector of sailors and fishermen, who asked her to bless their trips and catch many fish.

Atargatis was linked to things in the sky as well as things on Earth. As a goddess of the heavens, she was linked to astronomy and fortune-telling. This part of her prayer shows how interested ancient Syrians were in the

stars and how they thought there was a link between what happened in the sky and what happened on Earth.

The fact that Atargatis is also a force for good in the world shows how complicated she is. Some myths say that she taught people about different faiths and social norms and created technologies and tools that made life easier. Similar gods from other cultures, like Egypt's Isis, are shown in this way as the ones who bring about progress.

Many ancient gods were worshipped less and less as monotheistic faiths grew. Atargatis was one of them. Even so, her impact can still be seen in many forms of art and culture. The early stories of Atargatis have a lot to do with the idea of the mermaid, which has fascinated people for hundreds of years.

Dhat-Himyam-Radiant Goddess of South Arabia

Dhat-Himyam was one of the most important gods in South Arabia. He was in the same group as 'Athtar, the goddess of Venus, and Almaqah, the goddess of the moon. This divine triad was the most important part of religion in many South Arabian countries, especially in Saba, which the rest of the world called Sheba. Archaeologists have found ancient writings that talk about these gods together, which shows how important they were to the people's spiritual lives.

People from more than one tribe or country worshipped Dhat-Himyam. Her impact grew in many South Arabian states, such as Saba, Himyar, and Qataban. There may have been different ceremonies and traditions connected to the goddess in different areas. However, her main power, which was to control heat and its effects, stayed the same everywhere. It was thought that Dhat-Himyam, who was known as the Lady of Heat, controlled more than just the weather. She affected every part of life that was touched by heat and comfort.

Farmers would pray to her to make sure their crops got just the right amount of sunshine to grow. People who were travelling through the vast plains would look to her for shade from the harsh midday sun. People who worked with fire and forges, like metalworkers and artisans, saw her as a patron and thought that her holy heat flowed through their work.

South Arabians in the past had a complicated relationship with heat. Too much heat was necessary for life and farming, but it could also cause drought, famine, and death. Dhat-Himyam was seen as a goddess who needed to be worshipped and made happy. Most likely, celebrations of her arrival happened at the same time as the seasons changed, especially when the hottest months started. People would get together during these events to make sacrifices and follow rituals in order to win the goddess's favour and make sure the weather would be fair the next year.

Temples built in honour of Dhat-Himyam would have been beautiful buildings that captured the essence of her fiery personality. Archaeologists haven't found a temple that is definitely connected to her worship yet. However, based on other religious sites in South Arabia, we can imagine large buildings with tall columns and intricate stone carvings. The orientation of these temples may have been carefully planned to line up with the sun's path, making for dramatic lighting during important ritual times.

The images that were linked to Dhat-Himyam probably showed the sun and fire. She might have been shown as a beautiful woman carrying a torch or wearing a crown of sun rays. Lions and falcons, which are often found in hot places like the desert, may have been holy to her. Some researchers think that the colour red, which makes them think of fire and the setting sun, may have had a big part in how she was worshipped and portrayed.

One of the most interesting things about Dhat-Himyam's mythology is that she might have been linked to other old heat and sun gods. South Arabia isn't the only place where a sun goddess is thought of. The Egyptian goddess Sekhmet and the Greek god Helios are similar. This makes me wonder about how people from different cultures and religions shared thoughts and cultures along the old trade routes that went through the area.

It's possible that the cult of Dhat-Himyam had something to do with the stars. In a place where the movement of the stars and planets was closely connected to farming and guidance, the goddess of heat might have been linked to certain stars or constellations. Some researchers think that her worship may have had something to do with the rising of certain stars, which marked important times in the South Arabian calendar.

Dhat-Himyam was probably worshipped in many parts of daily life because she was the goddess of such a basic force of nature. While women were praying, they might have asked her to bless their ovens and hearths to keep the home's warmth going. They might have looked for her burning strength

before battle, thinking that it would make them brave and scare off their enemies.

The spread of monotheistic religions like Judaism, Christianity, and later Islam in Arabia led to the fall of polytheistic religions. This affected the worship of Dhat-Himyam. However, her impact may have lived on folk traditions and local customs for a long time after her official cult died down. Some researchers think that some fire-related rituals that are still done in some places of Yemen and Oman may have their roots in the worship of heat gods like Dhat-Himyam in the past.

Today, as we put together the few pieces of information we have about South Arabian religion, Dhat-Himyam shows how creative and spiritual the old Arabian people were. Her story makes us think of how deeply our ancestors connected with nature and how they tried to understand and connect with the strong forces that shaped their lives.

For example, we can learn that balance is important and that heat can be both good and bad. As long as historical work in the Arabian Peninsula goes on, we might learn more about Dhat-Himyam and what she did for South Arabian society. In ancient South Arabia, where tall mountains cast long shadows over vast fields, people believed in a group of gods who controlled the land and their thoughts. One of these goddesses stood out because she was fiery and had a strong connection to the intense heat that made it possible for people to live in this harsh but beautiful setting. Dhat-Himyam is her name, which means "Lady of Heat." She was a strange and strong person who affected everyone in Yemen and beyond.

It is hard to remember Dhat-Himyam's past, but her story is an important part of South Arabian society. As a goddess of heat, she represented the sun's strong power, which could be both good and bad in the dry climate of the Arabian Peninsula. Because her name means "She of the Heat," you can tell a lot about her main job and how highly the ancient Arabians regarded the sun's power.

Shams- The Radiant Sun Goddess

In Arabia before Islam, there was a pantheon of gods who ruled over the people's hearts and thoughts in the hot deserts and busy oasis. Among these old gods and goddesses, Shams, the beautiful sun goddess, stood out as the most beautiful. Her name, which means "shining" or "brilliant," perfectly described who she was: she was the sun that gave life across the Arabian sky.

In the religious life of southern Arabia, especially in the Himyarite Kingdom, Shams was a very important figure. In this place, she wasn't just a goddess; she was the protector goddess, and her warm, golden eyes watched over the land and its people. But Shams' power went far beyond the borders of any one country. Sun worship was something that all the different cultures and groups on the Arabian Peninsula had in common.

Before Islam, the Arabian religion was like a tapestry: local customs and widespread beliefs weaved together in a very interesting way. There were guardian gods and spirits that were very close to the land and the people in each tribe and country. Although there were also local gods, the sun, the moon, and Venus were the three most important heavenly bodies in the area and were respected by everyone. This cosmic triad reflected the brightest stars that could be seen in the Arabian night sky. Their moves showed how much time had passed and how the seasons had changed.

Interestingly, these gods' gender and other characteristics could change from one place to another. In the South of Arabia, she was called Shams, while in the north, she was called Nuha. The wide range of names and traits shows how different people believed across the Arabian Peninsula, with each area adding its special religious threads to the overall tapestry.

Shams wasn't the only one in the sky. People often worshipped her with male gods who stood for the moon and Venus as a heavenly trio. Shams, Athtar, the goddess of Venus, and Almaqah, the goddess of the moon,

worked together to make a strong trio in the kingdom of Saba. Each god was an important part of the cosmic order, and the family of gods looked a lot like the night sky.

The connection between Shams and Athtar is very interesting. In some beliefs, Shams was Athtar's wife. Together, they were like the sun and the evening star, with Athtar being the hot sun and Shams being the cooler star. Not only was Athtar linked to Venus, but he was also linked to war and, ironically, water, which gives life. In ancient Arabia, people had a complex view of nature and its forces, as shown by this link between the sun goddess and a god of both death and food.

When you lived in the hard deserts of Arabia, water was very valuable. The fact that Athtar, who was married to the sun goddess, was seen as a bringer of water shows how important celestial bodies were to people's lives on Earth in ancient times. The sun's hot rays could be both good and bad, and the fact that Shams was paired with a god who gave water may have been a sign of hope for balance in the natural world.

Many different ways were used to worship Shams all over Arabia. In some places, horses were used as votive gifts to honour her. Horses are strong and fast so they may have been a metaphor for the sun's path across the sky. The antelope was important to Athtar, so it may have also been used in ceremonies to honour Shams. In ancient events, these animal symbols would have been very important. Their shapes would have been carved into stone or made from precious metals as gifts for the beautiful goddess.

We find links between the stories about Shams that go beyond the borders of Arabia as we learn more about them. Scholars have found similarities between Shams and the sun god Shamash in the great cities of Mesopotamia. They have also found similarities between Athtar and the powerful goddess Ishtar. Along ancient trade paths that connected the Arabian Peninsula to the rest of the Near East, people from different cultures and religions came together to share ideas and practices.

The "Hymn of Qaniya," an old poem about Shams, gives us intriguing hints about how people thought about and worshipped the goddess. Scholars are still arguing about what this song really says. However, the fact that it exists shows that there is a long history of religious poetry and rituals connected to the sun goddess. This hymn's words sound like they would be sung at dawn, as the first rays of sunlight painted the desert sands gold and red.

They were thinking about how people worshipped Shams in Arabia before Islam, which makes us think of how people have always been interested in the sun. From ancient times to the present, the star closest to us has made people feel awe, fear, and respect. The ancient Arabians, who lived under its intense gaze, saw this heavenly power as a goddess who was more beautiful than any other goddess.

Shams' story and the stories of other gods can help us understand a time and place that is no longer known. But by looking into these old ideas, we learn not only about the religions of Arabia before Islam but also about how all people try to figure out where they fit in the universe. Even though Shams isn't worshipped any more, her bright figure helps us understand how ancient people made sense of the world around them and found god in the light that keeps life going on Earth.

Suwāʿ - The Enigmatic Goddess of Ancient Arabia

A long time ago, there was a goddess whose name would always be known. She lived in the hot deserts of Arabia, where the wind told stories of long-dead gods. What was her name? Suwāʿ and the Hudhail tribe worshipped her long before Islam became famous. A lot of her story has been lost over time, but the bits and pieces that are left paint an interesting picture of faith, society, and how beliefs change over time.

Think about a time when the Arabian Peninsula was a patchwork of different groups, each with its religion and gods. Suwāʿ was one of these gods who was very important. Suwāʿ was worshipped as a woman, while many of her god peers were said to have been men or dangerous animals. This feminine quality made her stand out in a universe that was mostly made up of male gods. This shows how complicated the role of gender was in early Arabian religion.

The main followers of Suwāʿ were the Hudhail tribe, who were known for being very good at poetry and very independent. They built a temple for her so that her followers could come to pray, ask for gifts, or enjoy being with their favourite goddess. This temple wasn't just a place to pray; it was a part of the Hudhail culture and spiritual heritage and a physical representation of who they were.

Suwāʿ 's power didn't just affect one group, however. The Quran, which is one of the most important sacred books ever written, has her name in it. But the Quran doesn't praise Suwāʿ ; it warns him. It tells us not to worship fake people and uses Suwāʿ and the other gods to show what can go wrong with faith. In this light, we can see how the spread of monotheism in Arabia caused a big shift in the way people thought about religion.

The old goddesss, like Suwāʿ , lost much power as Islam spread across the Arabian Peninsula. People used to worship a lot at the temple of Suwāʿ ,

but the new religion wanted to destroy idols, so they went after it. During the important Islamic month of Ramadan in 630 AD, the Prophet Muhammad told people to destroy Suwāʿ's mosque. It was called the Raid of Amr ibn al-As, and it marked the end of an age and the start of a new religious scene in Arabia.

Suwāʿ's fall was caused by more than just religious conflict. Things and ideas that had been used for hundreds of years changed at that moment. People who had honoured Suwāʿ for a long time must have been going through a really tough time. Suwāʿ was famous even after her temple was destroyed. People who studied and talked about her kept looking into her name and arguing about her. We can learn a lot about the faith in Arabia before Islam from her story. You could say that she went from being a real goddess to being an interesting historical and cultural figure.

Suwāʿ's influence makes us think about what it means to believe and how religious ideas have changed over time. How did she become known as a fake hero after being praised by many? What does her story tell us about how Arabian religion used women as gods in the past? How do groups deal with the tricky process of faith change?

People in Arabia still value her story, even though Suwāʿ is not honoured Today. A lot of different religions used to live on the Arabian Peninsula, and a lot of different things shaped their religious world. Suwāʿ is still interesting to scholars and people who are just interested in the past. It gives us a look into a world that is long gone but not forgotten.

Defenistions

Al-Lat: Goddess of fertility.

Al-Uzza: Goddess of power.

Manat: Goddess of fate.

Atargatis: Goddess of water.

Qaum: God of war.

Dushara: God of mountains.

Baalshamin: God of heavens.

Hubal: Moon god.

Manaf: Protective god.

Shams: Sun goddess.

Khusor: God of crafts.

Al-Qaum: God of war and the night.

Ruda: God of winds.

Wadd: God of love.

Suwāʿ: Goddess of war.

Yaghūth: God of strength.

Yaʿūq: God of protection.

Nasr: God of eagles.

Sa’d: God of fortune.

Mun'im: God of mercy.

Al-Kutbay: God of writing.

Azizos: God of morning star.

Salm: God of health.

Dahhak: God of agriculture.

Nergal: God of war.

Marduk: Chief god of Babylon.

Enki: God of wisdom.

Astarte: Goddess of fertility.

Anahita: Goddess of water.

El: Supreme god.

Sin: Moon god.

Shalim: God of dusk.

Resheph: God of plague.

Aglibol: Moon god.

Amm: Moon god.

Arsu: God of travelers.

Baal: Storm god.

Dagon: Grain god.

Hadad: Storm god.

Kothar: God of craftsmanship.

Melqart: God of Tyre.

Mot: God of death.

Shahar: God of dawn.

Tanit: Goddess of Carthage.

Yam: Sea god.

Chemosh: Moabite god.

Molek: God of fire.

Teshub: Hittite storm god.

Ashur: Assyrian god.

Nanna: Moon god.

Ningal: Moon goddess.

Ninurta: God of farming.

Tammuz: God of food and vegetation.

Shapash: Sun goddess.

Yarhibol: Sun god.

Zababa: Warrior god.

Nisroch: God of agriculture.

Gibil: God of fire.

Gerra: God of fire.

Utu: Sun god.

Ningirsu: War god.

Shala: Grain goddess.

Ugarit: Ancient city god.

One Last Thing...

We're glad you're interested in this book. I hope you have as much fun reading it as I did writing it. This book is for all those people with big eyes and many questions. I hope your interest in these old stories will help them live on forever.

I have always considered your insightful reviews to be an excellent source of viewpoints on books, and it would be an honour for me if you would review This book. Your perceptive analysis and comments would not only be of great use to me as an author, but they would also serve potential readers in understanding the issues and traits covered in the book. I am very aware of the constraints imposed by the little time you have at your disposal; thus, I ask that you please consider the following request.

I am thankful that you considered what I had to say about the book and took the time to do so. I would be more than happy to provide some further input and ideas. Please do not hesitate to contact me. If you would like to give feedback on my book, you only need to navigate to the reviews part of my content. You will notice a sizable button that asks you to "Write a customer review." Select that link, and you will be taken to the appropriate page.